

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A lens barrier mechanism comprising:

a lens tube;

a lens barrier rotated in a direction orthogonal to an optical axis of an image pickup lens exposed outward from a front part of the lens tube for opening/closing the front part of the lens tube;

a first energizing member for rotationally energizing the lens barrier;

a slider engaged with the lens barrier and sliding in the direction of the optical axis of the image pickup lens, thus regulating rotation of the lens barrier;

a second energizing member for energizing the slider so as to rotate the lens barrier in a direction opposite to the energizing direction of the first energizing member; and

a sliding mechanism for moving the slider.

2. The lens barrier mechanism as claimed in claim 1, wherein the sliding mechanism moves the slider into a direction opposite to the energizing direction of the second energizing member and rotates the lens barrier in the energizing direction of the first energizing member, thus opening or closing the front part of the lens tube, and the sliding mechanism moves the slider into the energizing direction of the second energizing member and rotates the lens barrier into the direction opposite to the energizing direction of the first energizing member by the energizing force of the second energizing member, thus closing or opening the front part of the lens tube.

3. The lens barrier mechanism as claimed in claim 2, wherein the first energizing member rotationally energizes the lens barrier in a direction of closing the front part of the lens tube, and the second energizing member energizes the

slider toward the front part of the lens tube.

4. The lens barrier mechanism as claimed in claim 2, wherein the sliding mechanism has an engagement member for engaging a rotary motor with the slider, and

the engagement member drives the rotary motor to move the slider in the direction of the optical axis of the image pickup lens.

5. The lens barrier mechanism as claimed in claim 1, wherein the second energizing member is a toggle spring.

6. The lens barrier mechanism as claimed in claim 5, wherein as a slide cam is manually operated, the toggle spring keeps energizing the slide cam in the operating direction.

7. A lens barrier mechanism comprising:

a lens tube;

a lens barrier rotated in a direction orthogonal to an optical axis of an image pickup lens exposed outward from a front part of the lens tube for opening/closing the front part of the lens tube; and

an opening/closing mechanism for opening/closing the lens barrier and turning on or off a main power of an image pickup apparatus body, interlocked with the opening/closing of the lens barrier.

8. The lens barrier mechanism as claimed in claim 7, wherein when the opening/closing mechanism is engaged with the lens barrier and rotated in an opening direction or closing direction of the lens barrier, the opening/closing mechanism is abutted against a main power switch of the image pickup apparatus body and turns on the main power.

9. An image pickup apparatus comprising:

a lens tube;

an image pickup lens housed in the lens tube and exposed outward from a front part of the lens tube;

a lens barrier rotated in a direction orthogonal to an optical axis of the image pickup lens for opening/closing the front part of the lens tube;

a first energizing member for rotationally energizing the lens barrier;

a slider engaged with the lens barrier and sliding in the direction of the optical axis of the image pickup lens, thus regulating rotation of the lens barrier;

a second energizing member for energizing the slider so as to rotate the lens barrier in a direction opposite to the energizing direction of the first energizing member; and

a sliding mechanism for moving the slider.